



## hold on by Val-Creative

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**Characters:** Eleven/Jane H., Joyce B., Nancy W., Will B.

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**Summary:** As soon as the battle for Starcourt Mall ends, Will and his family get blindsided by the laboratory soldiers ordering them to release Will into their custody. El immediately steps in, refusing to let him go.

## hold on

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There's so many dark camouflage uniforms that Will can hardly see the bystanders. Starcourt Mall glows in the far distance, covered in flames.

"Where's Dr. Owens?" Joyce asks, when one of the soldiers introduces himself. A jagged, healed scar over his jaw. Steely blue eyes.

"Detained for the moment. We are under direct orders to escort your son off the premises."

Joyce makes a low, outraged noise. Will feels her hand grasping his shoulder begin to tremble. He doesn't know what this is, but if they were guarding The Lab's original team or with the CIA — then they're all likely in big trouble.

"What has my boy *done*?" she says, louder. "And where is he going?"

"Our facility downstate. Temporarily," the soldier informs her, curtly. His expression vacant. "We want to question him about his involvement with this new threat. According to our report, Will Byers has a connection to it."

Something in Will's gut churns. An itching sensation on the back of Will's neck.

"Like *HELL* you're taking Will—" Nancy blurts out, approaching the soldier, and then throwing up her hands when a semi-automatic aims at her. The rest of the soldiers reveal their guns and high-powered tasers, and Jonathan and Lucas stiffen up nearby.

"Any interference with our orders will be met with force."

Will's heart pounds deafeningly. If he goes with them, he will *never* see his friends again. Or Jonathan or his mom. But if he *doesn't* listen to the overly aggressive military soldiers, they might hurt everyone.

The hand on Will's shoulder digs in harder.

He gulps, pushing down his terror, stepping away from Joyce and facing the towering soldier.

And at the same time, El smoothly blocks Will, positioning her arms behind her and tilting up her chin. Glaring into those steely blue eyes. No soldiers know it, but she's weak from losing blood and *powerless* — but if El could, she might have killed this guy by now, Will thinks to himself.

"El—"

"I lost Hop," El murmurs to Will, not looking away from the soldier. "I'm not losing you too." Will's confusion sinks into a pit of grim defeat. He reaches for one of El's arms wrapped protectively to him, his fingers clenching down lightly for her attention.

"*It's okay.*"

She shakes her head, glaring again and exposing her teeth. The soldier curses, pointing his weapon to El's nose.

Joyce puts a hand to the gun's muzzle.

"Do you people know *who* this is?" she declares, frowning. "Eleven. Brenner's child he turned into his own personal war machine. I know you know who Dr. Martin Brenner is. And what he *created*." Joyce releases a heavy, mocking sigh. "I don't think you want to clean up more of a mess tonight—not with the reporters swarming in the parking lot."

The soldier glares at Joyce, instead of El, ordering another man next to him and sulking out. The rest of the soldiers file out, toting their guns.

"*Thanks,*" Will breathes, as El turns around. He throws his arms around her, hearing El snifle wetly and lean into him. She's already lost so much. Will doesn't want to see her like this again. And he didn't mean to call her *stupid*, or act so jealous when Mike hung out with her. He likes her. He really does.

"You're my friend, Will," El mumbles, smiling slightly against his ear.

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*Stranger Things isn't mine. Requested by kirabook (AO3): "anything related to Will and El friendship/siblinghood." I'M SO WEAK FOR FOUND FAMILY. I LOVE THESE TWO. Thanks for this prompt and thank you everyone who reads this fic! Any comments/thoughts are absolutely appreciated!*

*((Want a request for Stranger Things? I'm doing 100-500 word drabbles of any friendship or romantic ship + any prompt until I feel like quitting. Rules: you need to comment here and provide a friendship or romantic ship and prompt. Please do not ask for anything with Billy Hargrove. Thank you. The only requests I'll be looking at is if you ALSO commented about the fic you just read as well. It's only fair. You came to this fic to read it and me doing something for you later on is a sweet bonus!))*